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PAGE 02 OF 04 STATE 016235
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TO AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS IMMEDIATE

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FROM UNDER SECRETARY ARMACOST

E. O. 12356: DECL: OADR

TAGS: PREL, PTER, LE, SY, US

SUBJECT: DEMARCHE TO SYRIANS AND SAUDIS REGARDING
ISLAMIC JIHAD STATEMENT

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SECRET

Department of State

S/S-0
OUTGOING

PAGE 03 OF 04 STATE 016235

C14/17 001718 NOD973

1. (S - ENTIRE TEXT.)

2. DAMASCUS AND RIYADH SHOULD APPROACH HOST GOVERNMENTS AT APPROPRIATELY HIGH LEVELS AS SOON AS POSSIBLE AND DELIVER DEMARCHES BASED ON THE TALKING POINTS PROVIDED BELOW. ADDRESSEES WILL NOTE THAT THESE POINTS ARE IDENTICAL TO SEPTEL TALKING POINTS SENT FOR BEIRUT AND ALGIERS, EXCEPT FOR THE FINAL TWO ADDITIONAL TALKING POINTS WHICH ARE SPECIFICALLY DIRECTED AT THE SYRIANS. THE SAUDIS SHOULD ALSO BE INFORMED, HOWEVER, OF THE SUBSTANCE OF THESE ADDITIONAL POINTS AND THE FACT THAT THEY ARE BEING CONVEYED TO THE SYRIANS.

-- THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT VIEWS WITH THE UTMOST GRAVITY AND CONCERN THE JANUARY 14 STATEMENT BY ISLAMIC JIHAD IN BEIRUT THAT THE FIVE AMERICANS KIDNAPPED IN LEBANON WILL BE TRIED AS SPIES.

-- IT GOES WITHOUT SAYING THAT THERE IS ABSOLUTELY NO TRUTH TO THE CHARGE THAT THESE CITIZENS HAVE USED

JOURNALISM, EDUCATION AND RELIGION AS A COVER FOR SPYING. NEVERTHELESS, SOME OF THE KIDNAP VICTIMS HAVE BEEN IN THE HANDS OF THE TERRORISTS NOW FOR ALMOST A YEAR. THEIR SUFFERING AND THAT OF THEIR FAMILIES IS BEYOND WORDS.

-- WE DO NOT, HOWEVER, WISH TO ENGAGE IN A DEBATE WITH TERRORISTS ABOUT THE LIVES OF OUR CITIZENS. THIS LATEST THREAT CONTRAVENES ALL CIVILIZED NORMS OF HUMAN BEHAVIOR AND COMMON DECENCY, AS WELL AS ISLAMIC INJUNCTIONS REGARDING HOSPITALITY AND THE TREATMENT OF GUESTS.

-- CLEARLY THE LIVES OF THESE FIVE INNOCENT AMERICANS ARE NOW IN JEOPARDY. THERE IS NO TIME LEFT FOR PATIENCE. WE

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OUTGOING

PAGE 04 OF 04 STATE 016235

C14/17 001718 NOD973

CALL UPON YOUR GOVERNMENT TO DO EVERYTHING IT CAN TO -
EFFECT THE SAFE RELEASE OF THE AMERICANS. WE HAVE ASKED
FOR YOUR HELP IN THE PAST, BUT WE MAY NOW BE RUNNING OUT
OF TIME. IT IS ESSENTIAL THAT WE REDOUBLE ALL EFFORTS TO
SECURE THE RELEASE OF THESE INNOCENT PEOPLE TO THEIR
FAMILIES. WE URGE YOU IN THE STRONGEST TERMS TO TAKE
EVERY POSSIBLE MEASURE YOU CAN TO FREE OUR PEOPLE.

-- SHOULD HARM COME TO THESE FIVE AMERICANS, THE UNITED
STATES WOULD HAVE TO TAKE ACTIONS WHICH IT DEEMS
APPROPRIATE.

-- WE APPRECIATE THE EFFORTS YOUR GOVERNMENT HAS ALREADY
TAKEN ON BEHALF OF THE KIDNAPPED AMERICANS. OBVIOUSLY,
HOWEVER, THERE HAS BEEN NO PROGRESS. MOREOVER, THE
UNITED STATES CANNOT IGNORE THE FACT THAT THE CONTINUED,
REPEATED KIDNAPPING OF AMERICAN CITIZENS COULD NOT HAVE
TAKEN PLACE WITHOUT THE USE OF TERRITORY INSIDE LEBANON
UNDER YOUR EFFECTIVE CONTROL. THE LATEST KIDNAPPINGS
HAVE TAKEN PLACE AFTER YOU TOLD US OF YOUR EFFORTS TO GET
THE FIRST THREE AMERICANS RELEASED AND AFTER EXCHANGES -
BETWEEN OUR TWO GOVERNMENTS AT THE HIGHEST LEVELS.

-- IN THIS REGARD, I AM AUTHORIZED TO TELL YOU THAT WE
HAVE VERY CLEAR INTELLIGENCE THAT THE GOVERNMENT OF IRAN
MAINTAINS LINKS WITH AND SUPPORTS THOSE HOLDING OUR
CITIZENS THROUGH THE USE OF YOUR TERRITORY AND TERRITORY
UNDER YOUR CONTROL INSIDE LEBANON. THIS IS NOT A FACTOR
THAT CAN BE IGNORED WHEN WE CONSIDER THE GRAVE THREAT TO
OUR CITIZENS.

3. BEIRUT MINIMIZED CONSIDERED.

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